

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 126826
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY M/CT RPMYERS:NWH
APPROVED BY M/CT: AMB. HECK
ARA/AND - MR. COX (PHONE)
PC - MR. CAWLEY (SUBS)
WHITE HOUSE - MS. PISANO (INFO)
S/S -S. GOLDSMITH

-----020102Z 029656 /64

O 020050Z JUN 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 126826

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO

SUBJECT:STARR KIDNAPPING: LETTERS TO STARR'S MOTHER

REF: STATE 065725

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER DATED MAY 11 WHICH MRS.
JENSEN RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO HER LETTER (PARA 5, REFTEL)
TO COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT LOPEZ: QUOTE:

DEAR MADAM: FOR MANY DAYS YOUR SON'S WHEREABOUTS HAS
BEEN THE PRESIDENT'S MAIN CONCERN. THE GOVERNMENT SHARES
YOUR PRE-OCCUPATION ON THIS MATTER AND EVERYTHING
WITHIN ITS POWER IS BEING DONE TO FIND HIM AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE. PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT ANY INFORMATION REGARD-
ING YOUR SON WILL BE RELAYED TO YOU IMMEDIATELY.

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SINCERELY YOURS,

CLARA EUGENIA LOPEZ
ECONOMIC SECRETARY
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE,

UNQUOTE

2. PRESIDENT CARTER ALSO SENT A LETTER TO MRS. JENSEN
ON MAY 26. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER:
QUOTE: TO MRS. JENSEN:

I READ YOUR LETTER OF APRIL 21 WITH GREAT SYMP-
ATHY, AND I SHARE YOUR CONCERN FOR YOUR SON, RICHARD.

QUOTE: AS THE SON OF A PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, I HAVE A
PARTICULAR RESPECT FOR THE WORK VOLUNTEERS PERFORM, OFTEN
AT PHYSICAL RISK AND PERSONAL SACRIFICE.

QUOTE: THE PEACE CORPS TRIES TO MINIMIZE THAT RISK BY
CAREFUL SCREENING OF THE SITES TO WHICH VOLUNTEERS ARE
ASSIGNED, IN ORDER TO AVOID PLACING THEM IN DANGEROUS
SITUATIONS. INDEED, RICHARD IS THE FIRST VOLUNTEER IN
THE PEACE CORPS' 16-YEAR HISTORY TO BE SEIZED AND HELD
HOSTAGE FOR SO LONG. WE HOPE THAT HIS KIDNAPPERS WILL
RELEASE HIM VOLUNTARILY ONCE THEY UNDERSTAND THAT HE IS
NOTHING MORE SINISTER THAN A BOTANIST TRYING TO SERVE THE
COLOMBIAN PEOPLE.

QUOTE: THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND OUR OWN ARE DOING
EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO FIND RICHARD AND BRING ABOUT HIS
SAFE RELEASE. THANKS IN PART TO THE EFFORTS OF U.S. OF-
FICIALS HERE AND IN BOGOTA, THE PACK YOU MENTIONED IN
YOUR LETTER HAS NOW BEEN DELIVERED TO THE COLOMBIAN RED
CROSS. WE HOPE THAT THE PACK, AND THE PERSONAL ITEMS IT
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CONTAINS, WILL REACH RICHARD WHEREVER HE MAY BE HELD, AND
THAT A CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION CAN BE ESTABLISHED
WHICH COULD LEAD TO HIS RELEASE.

QUOTE: I HAVE ASKED MY WIFE, WHO IS ABOUT TO VISIT
COLOMBIA DURING HER LATIN AMERICAN TRIP, TO PASS ON TO
COLOMBIAN AUTHORITIES MY PERSONAL CONCERN FOR YOUR SON'S
WELFARE.

QUOTE: PEACE CORPS AND STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES
WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP YOU FULLY INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS
IN RICHARD'S CASE. I HOPE THAT WE WILL SOON HAVE GOOD
NEWS FOR YOU, AS I KNOW HOW HEAVILY THE PRESENT UNCER-
TAINTY AND FRUSTRATION MUST WEIGH ON YOU.

SINCERELY,

JIMMY CARTER UNQUOTE

3. AT PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 2, MRS. JENSEN DOES NOT INTEND
TO REVEAL PRECISE CONTENTS OF EITHER LETTER. IF ASKED

SPECIFICALLY ABOUT WHETHER SHE HAS HEARD FROM GOC OR
PRESIDENT CARTER SHE WILL ANSWER THAT SHE HAS RECEIVED
SYMPATHETIC REPLIES TO HER APPEALS FROM BOTH. IN PAR-
TICULAR, SHE WILL NOT MAKE ANY REFERENCE TO MRS. CARTER'S
DEMARCHE TO GOC ON RICHARD'S BEHALF AT PRESIDENT CARTER'S
REQUEST. HABIB

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Message Attributes

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